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—Horace Gregory

THE

Commonweal

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Report on Subliminal Advertising

by Jack Patterson

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THE Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts

THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

—week by week—

PEACE AND PROPAGANDA

ADMINISTRATION spokesmen concede, grudgingly, that the U.S.S.R. has scored a propaganda advantage by announcing its unilateral suspension of nuclear tests. But apparently they don't attach much importance to the Russian step.

President Eisenhower dismissed the problem in language dismayingly close to his contemptuous response to the launching of Sputnik I. He thought the ban on nuclear test explosions no more than "a gimmick" and "a side issue." Secretary of State Dulles announced that the Administration some weeks ago thought of "stealing a march on the Soviets by ourselves announcing a suspension of testing, at least for a time." But, explained Mr. Dulles, it was thought not worthwhile to sacrifice the knowledge to be gained from further nuclear tests "merely for propaganda advantages." And George V. Allen, director of the United States Information Agency, has scolded Americans for their alarm at the failure of the Administration to meet Russian peace propaganda. "Americans should grow up," Mr. Allen said, and not get "too excited" about these things.

The President, Mr. Dulles, Mr. Allen—all the Administration officials who have spoken on the matter—seem to think that the problem is a technical one, of public relations or "propaganda," and to be solved by some kind of Madison Avenue maneuver. There is no questioning of the commodity, just the admission that the sales campaign, or maybe the packaging, might be somewhat lacking in consumer appeal. Asked about plans to improve our performance against the Russians in the arena of world opinion, Mr. Eisenhower spoke vaguely of working "to improve the thing and so sell this program to the Congress that they will support it properly."

These reactions to criticisms of the Administration's handling of the Soviet "peace" proposals—with the related questions of summit talks, disarmament, nuclear weapons and tests—amount to further, discouraging demonstrations that our difficulties in this field are obviously not merely technical. Our responses to the latest Russian tactics have been ineptly handled, admittedly, but they have been inept in themselves. And there seems small hope of any improvement until President Eisenhower and his advisers indicate that they at least recognize the problem.

TODAY, with universal destruction moving steadily closer, our one overriding concern must be—peace. The horrors that threaten the human race today cannot be exaggerated. The responsibilities we bear, for one another, for our children and our children's children, cannot be exaggerated. And nothing that involves this awful threat can be called "a side issue."

This is not to say that our course is easily charted, that the immediate decisions which the leaders of our government must face are not terribly difficult ones. But the facts above—of all humanity's present danger, of the enormous consequences of our actions—impose a burden of responsibility, an imperative to the utmost in human effort, with which Administration leaders seem incredibly unconcerned.

The President and his advisers knew in advance that the U.S.S.R. was planning to announce the suspension of nuclear tests, and yet, fantastically, they did nothing. The Soviet announcement came, as we know, after an extensive—and, incidentally, a particularly "dirty"—series of tests. It seems obvious that a documented, factual report on these tests, given world-wide dissemination, would have

greatly reduced the propaganda impact of the Soviet "renunciation" of nuclear tests, for the sake of humanity, as they said, and as a step towards peace.

And is it unquestionable that we could not have renounced our own tests, before the Soviet statement? Insofar as military advantage is concerned, do we not already have hydrogen warheads capable of annihilating the Soviets? Is not our urgent military deficiency, in terms of the "balance of terror," in rocket vehicles for these warheads, rather than in "cleaner" and more diversified weapons? There would have been a certain military advantage lost if we had canceled our tests, but the "propaganda" advantage cannot be lightly dismissed, not to mention the advantage to humankind if peace were truly brought a little closer, if a few thousand of our children were saved from blood and bone cancer.

If—and it is not an easy if—it seemed clearly wiser to conduct the tests, in the face of all these considerations, why could not the pros and cons which went into the decision be presented to the world? A detailed account of the purposes of the tests, the amount of fall-out to be expected, and where, when and how, with invitations to observe the tests to representatives from all over the world, would have done much to allay world fears and resentments.

There are many things which might have been done. Anything would have been better than the Administration "decision," if it was one, to do simply *nothing*. Crucial judgments are made, it seems, with no realization of how crucial they are. Decisions are made—or happen—in secret, and they are released, if at all, in contradictory bits and pieces, from one government agency or another. They add up to a policy of confusion, drift, inertia, irresponsibility. The Administration's sales talk has been poor, but the greater problem is in the nuclear program it is trying to sell. What is it?

FIXED INCOMES

A NUMBER of months ago, when the country was enjoying better times, there was much talk about applying brakes, if not to the economy, at least to the wage-price spiral. The cautions of those times on proposed credit restrictions, for instance, reflected more than anything else a fear of deflation. Such a reversal of the upward trend was doubtless expected to lead eventually to a recession somewhat like that which we are now experiencing, but fear of deflation itself was uppermost.

Today, with a full-scale recession on our hands, there is little talk about deflation. In certain industries management must be nearing the point at which idle plants will cost the corporation reductions in profits similar to what would result from the lowering of prices. Yet few companies seem willing to take their chances on the beneficent effects of the larger demand that would result from price-cutting. Workers do not find that they or their families are actually in a position to contemplate a reduction in their real wages.

One of the themes which is repeated during the "wait and see" period decreed by the Administration is that all citizens should do their part in fighting the recession. Workers are urged to restrain their wage demands and farmers their quest for high crop supports. Manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers are supposed to be content with lower prices and smaller profits, consumers to stop holding back their vital purchasing power, etc., etc. Each group of citizens in turn rightly asks why they specifically should be requested to assume the burden as if this were a freely functioning economy and without any guarantee that all the other components will consent to the requested sacrifices. By and large these pleas of the President for self-restraint fall on deaf ears. For this and other reasons inflation appears destined to continue for an indefinite period.

The American people must therefore expect to find their dollar continuously shrinking in value. The hope is that the process can be slowed down and kept within certain bounds. Such a prospect of continuous inflation means that individuals and institutions will have to revise their plans for providing for their future. Nowhere does this seem more essential than in the field of social security, where benefit payments are close to a minimum to begin with. G. Warfield Hobbs, a prominent New York banker who is chairman of the National Committee on the Aging, has recently pointed out that social security benefits have continued at the same rate for the past four years, while the cost of living was rising from eight to ten per cent. One of the many adjustments called for by a continuous rise in living costs is some method of pegging social security benefits to the cost of living index.

THE POPE'S EASTER MESSAGE

THE PONTIFICATE of Pius XII has long been noted for its dedication to the cause of world peace and its solicitude for all humanity. Again

and again the present Pontiff has reached out to embrace and exhort all men of good will. Both concerns mark this year's Easter message. Pius XII cites the diligence of the Church "in spreading and defending the truth . . . its impartiality between classes and nations, its steadfastness in protecting the rights of individuals. . . ." Were it not for the Church, he goes on to ask, "would there still be alive in the conscience of mankind that widespread sense of justice, of true freedom and responsibility which animates the majority of peoples and governments? . . . Who, if not Christ, is able to gather and fuse within one single rhythm of brotherly harmony, men so different in race, language and customs as are all of you? . . . He in truth it is, Who has triumphed over the shadows of death and shines out like a bright star over the whole human race."

Earlier in his address the Pope referred to the failings of Catholics as "the inevitable shadows which accompany all reality that also contains the human element." He asks: "What 'good works' more useful to the world can be done at the present day by all who are Christians than the promotion with all their resources of the firm restoration of a just peace? Individuals and peoples, nations and states, institutions and groups, are invited by the Prince of Peace to press on with confidence in this difficult and urgent task, for the glory of God."

MORE ON KOHLER

WE DISCUSSED the Kohler strike and the Senate labor hearings in our March 21st issue. In that editorial, to which a few of our readers have since taken exception, we said that we thought the Senate group was poorly advised to go into the Kohler strike in the first place and that it would be wise to move on to other matters as soon as possible. Nothing has happened since to change our minds on this point.

When we wrote our editorial, it seemed common sense to say that no Senate committee, operating under conditions of maximum publicity, could improve conditions in Kohler, and we think that events since then have borne out this conclusion. There is no doubt at all that the Kohler investigation could go on for months, and it certainly makes news when Senator Goldwater and Walter Reuther tangle in public. But what have the hearings accomplished except to show what everyone knew all along—that feelings on both sides run very deep, that neither side comes into court with com-

pletely clean hands, and that some kind of settlement must be reached away from the glare of publicity?

Meantime, the passions of that long-drawn-out Kohler struggle have communicated themselves to the members of the committee itself, making even more difficult the kind of serious and painstaking investigations that beg for attention. There are, for example, several large unions that would be better for a thorough scrutiny like that given to Dave Beck and James Hoffa and the Teamsters, and there is the hardly touched field of "management consultants," where evidence already exists to indicate that serious evasions of the law are taking place. These matters are more important than re-hashing any one strike, at Kohler or anywhere else. We therefore repeat the sentiments of our earlier editorial: there is useful work waiting for the committee to do; we wish it would get on with it.

THE INSIDE STORY

THERE IS one art form on the American scene that is going almost unheralded—the "inside report" newsletter, which uses the modified Hemingway or "Dragnet" style. After reading one of these newsletters designed for the publishing industry, we decided to give our readers a complete report on *The Commonweal*, written, if that is the word we want, in the new tight-lipped style.

* * *

The Commonweal Story. Like everybody else's. Not enough capital. Word from the inside: happiness won't buy money.

How come? Subscriptions far above ten years ago. Advertising good too. This on credit side. But situation bad cost-wise. Printing, paper, other expenses in orbit with sputnik.

What to do? Silly question. If we knew, we'd have bought *Collier's*.

The Problem. Publishing takes money. How much? Lots. Iron law at *The Commonweal*: outgo slightly more than income. In short, Micawber-like situation.

How we feel? Terrible. How would you feel?

Scientific approach. Action called for. Made surveys. Prepared tables. Drew graphs. Prepared motivational research. Did analysis, both in depth and shallow.

Results. Situation worse than expected. Also had to pay for surveys, which did not help.

Other mags. *Collier's* now only a memory.

Sports Illustrated reported breathing hard. *Everywoman's* merged with competitor. *McCall's* profit margin said to be shrinking. *Redbook* causing talk.

What this means. Magazines lose money. Some more than others. Big magazines big money. Small magazines small money. Our conclusion: glad we are small.

The Future. Despite everything, confidence prevails. Not noisy confidence—quiet.

How so? Our readers. The best. Loyal. Makes for high renewal rate. They tell friends. Friends subscribe. Buy products advertised. Advertisers happy. When advertisers happy, all happy. Everybody knows that.

Upshot. Chin up. Not licked yet. Not by a long shot. Our formula: keep from becoming too successful. Then may break even. Who knows? Look what happened to big *Collier's*. End of report.

DEFENDER OF MADISON AVENUE

WHAT IS the relation between a man's thought and his style? One of the most recent responses to this much-discussed question was given by a young free-lance writer, Martin Mayer, the author of *Madison Avenue U.S.A.*, a favorable study of the advertising community in this country. This relatively esoteric subject came up in an interview in which Mike Wallace asked Mr. Mayer why he defended the advertising business and whether he thought advertising intruded false values into the society.

"Advertising," Mr. Mayer responded, "reflects the mores of the community. It panders to coarse, vulgar, common values and tastes, because these are the values and tastes of the country. If advertising reflected a higher standard of taste it wouldn't sell products as efficiently." Asked why he whitewashed an industry he evidently viewed with distaste, Mr. Mayer said: "I don't think I whitewashed it. I was neutral. I suppose I'd feel a far greater compulsion to attack things I don't like if I thought the human animal could be changed in any way . . . if I thought my own opinions were any more valid than the opinions of the majority." But didn't he feel his opinions were valid? "No, I wouldn't wish to define any of my thoughts or opinions as truths. Truth is a relative matter. Any idiot's truth is as good as mine."

Even Mr. Wallace seemed taken aback by this: "Well, why on earth do you write, Marty? Isn't it to express ideas and truths?"

"Interesting question. No, I write as an exercise

in craftsmanship. I write for the love of making sentences—not nearly so much for the love of what the sentences say."

Even in these few excerpted exchanges there is enough material for several painful reflections. If Mr. Mayer means what he says—and there is no reason to doubt his sincerity—he has become the severest critic of his own book. For who would respect or wish to read the opinions of a man who places so little value on them himself? That a spokesman for Madison Avenue should embrace so wholeheartedly the egalitarianism feared by the most perceptive of our earlier social critics will seem, to many people, proper and fitting. But others will think that a closer correspondence to reality would show that the common fears concerning Madison Avenue had little basis, that the self-appointed spokesman spoke only for himself.

There would be little reason to be exercised about Mr. Mayer's opinions if they were limited to him, but the thought insistently intrudes itself that he might be reflecting the opinions and attitudes of many other people in our society—and that is a disturbing idea.

BUNNIES AND EGGS

WHILE DISCUSSING the nature of the mysterious collusion that must exist between rabbits and chickens before Easter bunnies could provide Easter eggs, we suddenly discovered that none of the editors was fully aware of the tradition from which this custom derives. Turning to Donald Attwater's *A Catholic Dictionary* we did find the following:

"Easter eggs may possibly be a 'baptized' pagan custom, since they are an obvious symbol of fertility. But an utilitarian explanation seems more likely: during Lent, eggs were forbidden in early times as articles of diet, so when Easter came, the eggs which had accumulated, lamb's flesh, etc., now once more available, were specially blessed, partly perhaps with a view to restraining gluttony after long deprivation. In many places, it is still the practice to paint the eggs and bring them to church in decorated baskets for a blessing before or after Mass. Chocolate eggs and such-like fooleries are a degeneration of no significance. Blessings for eggs, bread and the lamb at Easter are provided in the 'Rituale Romanum.'"

Well, that was as much as we wanted to know about Easter eggs, but we have yet to learn why the bunny is the traditional carrier.

Invisible Salesman

Is subliminal advertising a sinister new force in the art of mass communication, or is it just another crackpot idea, doomed to inevitable failure?

by JACK PATTERSON

ONE DAY last summer the audience in a motion picture theater in New Jersey sat blissfully watching the picture. These moviegoers, though unaware of it, were watching more than just a movie. James Vicary, a forty-two-year-old New York research specialist, was using a device he had invented to project messages on the theater screen along with the film. The messages were simple two-word commands: "Drink Coca-Cola" and "Eat Popcorn." But they flashed on and off so fast—lasting about 1/3000th of a second—that they were invisible, and the audience never knew that anything unusual was happening.

Soon afterward Mr. Vicary called a press conference to reveal what he had done and to disclose a few meager details of results. Members of the theater audience did not consciously see the ads projected on the theater screen, he explained to reporters, but they nonetheless perceived them on an unconscious, or preconscious, level. Once in the unconscious, the ads exerted significant influence. Under the stimulus of his unseen sales pitch, Mr. Vicary claimed, theater patrons during a six-week trial period had bought eighteen per cent more Coca-Cola and fifty-eight per cent more popcorn from the stand in the theater lobby. Mr. Vicary termed his startling new sales technique subliminal projection advertising.

To sell the new kind of advertising to advertisers, advertising agencies, television stations and motion picture producers and theaters, Mr. Vicary and several associates had put together a new company, Subliminal Projection, Inc. Shortly afterward it was disclosed that still another firm, Precon (for "preconscious") Process and Equipment Corp., was plunging into the subliminal advertising business.

The reaction to the initial announcement about

subliminal advertising was swift and hardly friendly. All over the country newspapers announced the debut of a new kind of invisible advertising, one whose special claim was that it could stir people to buy corn flakes and toothpaste without letting them know they were being prodded. Throughout their accounts of the process, reporters scattered terms like "brainwashing," "manipulating," and "something out of George Orwell" freely. Clearly, there was a widespread fear that a sinister new force had been added to the dark arts of mass persuasion.

Most people immediately asked: "Will subliminal advertising really work?" From a practical point of view this is, of course, the crucial question. As yet no conclusive answer is available, but a review of recent developments offers a few tentative ones.

Last January the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. permitted Subliminal Projection to stage a test over its television network. During the program the announcer explained to viewers that an undisclosed subliminal message was being broadcast over their television screens, and asked them to watch for anything unusual. Checking next day failed to turn up a single person who had any notion what the message had been.

Undaunted, Subliminal Projection tried again next Sunday. They flashed their message 325 times during the program, and asked for letters from anybody who thought he had the correct answer. Five hundred replies poured in but not one right answer.

THIS CANADIAN TEST, one of a dozen that various groups have conducted since subliminal advertising appeared in public, points up a significant fact. Nobody has yet been able even to approach the results Mr. Vicary claims he achieved in the New Jersey theater. The outcome of most experiments, in fact, has been more discouraging than sinister.

Mr. Patterson, a frequent contributor, is on the staff of a New York publishing house.

Take, for example, the experience of three hundred broadcasters attending a convention in San Francisco last month. They watched a film which included a subliminal ad for Coca-Cola, and later they answered some questions in writing. Most of them thought they had seen ads for Chrysler Corp. or Wrigley's gum. Reporting on their emotions during the film, thirty-five said they were made nervous, twenty-nine lethargic, twenty-three tired; forty-two felt like smoking, twenty-six like drinking, twenty-one like eating, ten like chewing. Some thirty-two did say they felt thirsty, but another fifty-two felt anxious, ten hungry, and seven sexy. Thumbing through these statistics, Dr. Robert Haber of Stanford, who helped prepare the test, declared the experiment proved "nothing much."

Last January, in Washington, the Subliminal Projection people ran through their "eat popcorn" appeal in a test performance before members of Congress, the Federal Communications Commission and the Federal Trade Commission. After peering at the television screen for a while, one Congressman reported he wanted a hot dog, and another got thirsty. Then Subliminal Projection told its audience they would receive a public service message, and switched to "Fight Polio." Queried, one Representative ventured a guess: "Contribute to the Red Cross."

THE SUBLIMINAL advertising roadshow not only flopped on its out-of-town run, but so far it has failed even to open on Madison Avenue. Indeed, psychologists in advertising agency research departments are among its sourest critics.

Subliminal perception, these experts are quick to point out, is a recognized psychological phenomenon demonstrated in many laboratory tests. Most large agencies have investigated it already and are familiar with the body of scientific literature about it. Their conclusions do not match those of Mr. Vicary.

One psychologist for a prominent agency I talked to referred to the September 1957 issue of the "Bulletin of the American Psychological Association," which contained a lengthy article reviewing most of the experimental studies made in subliminal perception up to that date. The article was written in Psychology rather than English, but as interpreted by the agency man, the author's conclusion is this: Laboratory tests have shown that subliminal perception can influence behavior in a variety of ways. But so far nobody has been able to find a way to produce the same measurable results on a consistent basis. About the only type of behavior which subliminal projection can affect regularly is an object recognition test in which a subject is exposed to a subliminal symbol, then asked to recognize it among a group of symbols. People who have perceived the symbol subliminally score higher in recognition tests than people who have not, demon-

strating that the subliminal message had some impact.

Shaping such laboratory experiments into a practical selling tool presents enormous difficulties. No agency psychologists will say flatly that this cannot be done. But the views of experts in a group of leading New York agencies boil down to agreement with Dr. Arthur Koponen, psychologist with the world's largest advertising agency, J. Walter Thompson, who reports: "There is no experimental evidence available that shows subliminal projection can influence product sales on television or in the movies."

IT WOULD BE tempting, after reading all this, to dismiss subliminal advertising as just another crackpot idea that has already bloomed its brief hour in the sunlight. Before doing this, however, other aspects should be looked at.

For one thing, despite the coolness of most advertising agencies, subliminal advertising has fired the imagination of many eager salesmen. Television station KTLA, Los Angeles, for example, has contracted with Precon to test a series of subliminal ads soon. In the same city, a movie theater is running subliminal popcorn ads; if these sell more popcorn, the message will run in several hundred other theaters. Twentieth-Century Fox Corp. is reportedly thinking about incorporating non-commercial subliminal ads over its facilities.

In addition, the subliminal idea is spreading. Determined not to be left behind, radio is evolving its own brand of subliminal sound advertising. This generally involves playing a phonograph record, then muttering commercials in a low voice while listeners are listening to the music. Presumably, hearers absorb the sales pitch with the music and are none the wiser.

Guild, Bascom and Bonfigli, a San Francisco advertising agency, has utilized this principle for its client, "Nucoa" brand margarine, in a musical jingle including a subliminal advertising line, now playing on radio and television stations around the country. In Chicago, station WAAF will advertise products while music is playing, with three commercials, two subaudibly, one just within hearing range. WCCO, Minneapolis, is broadcasting non-commercial messages during music, experimenting with varying volume and intensity. If the station finds that listeners are responding, it will give sponsors a chance to buy ads.

Such evidence shows that early keen interest in subliminal advertising has not been seriously blunted by negative reports. Further, the promoters are hard at work to overcome precisely the difficulties others have encountered in the past. Precon's Dr. Robert E. Corrigan and Professor Hal C. Becker, both associated with Tulane University, aim to go beyond just flashing a direct sales appeal on a screen. They claim evidence, for example, that when a company trade mark is included subliminally in a film the audience transfers part

of its pleasure at the entertainment to the symbol, creating a good feeling toward the company in the minds of viewers. Precon also wants to use subliminal material to enhance the dramatic appeal of movies and T.V. films, raising box office receipts or the all-important television ratings.

THE PRESS in general has been hostile to the whole idea. The N. Y. *Times* cautioned, for example, that "subliminal advertising is potentially dangerous just to the degree that it is successful, and the Los Angeles television station that says it's about to employ this technique is certainly playing with fire . . . we hope the F.C.C. is taking it seriously enough to be carefully watching this eerie development."

The F.C.C. is watching. Right after the news broke, Congressmen began receiving letters from outraged constituents, and the F.C.C., in turn, began receiving phone calls from Congressmen. With its usual sensitivity to Congressional wishes, F.C.C. asked all television and radio stations to hold off using any subliminal advertising until it could investigate the process. Also, the National Association of Broadcasters, composed of most of the country's television and radio stations, requested its members not to accept subliminal advertising, and the three networks pledged that they would broadcast no such material over their facilities. New York's State Senate has passed a bill to control subliminal advertising, and finally, Representative James C. Wright, Jr. of Texas, not waiting for the F.C.C. to act, has introduced a bill in Congress to outlaw subliminal advertising from the airwaves completely.

Much of the indignation over subliminal advertising undoubtedly stems from a reserve of distrust and hostility which many people feel for advertising generally. This reserve is fed by a rich stream of books and articles—many of them, it should be said, sensationalist and inaccurate—attacking the Madison Avenue huckster. Subliminal advertising, for example, is specifically mentioned in Vance Packard's best-selling chronicle of advertising horrors, *The Hidden Persuaders*, which tells how advertisers are wielding with growing subtlety and skill the insights and techniques of the behavioral sciences to ensnare the hapless buyer in a web of his own irrational desires and fears. For many, subliminal advertising confirms their worst fears about advertising. They see it as another, more terrible weapon in Madison Avenue's arsenal for overpowering the human will.

By and large, however, advertising men have not seized the new weapon offered them. Whether from public relations considerations, skepticism or moral outrage, a good many advertising men have drawn back. One advertising executive, Frank Ewing, chairman of Fensholt Advertising Agency, Chicago, wrote F.C.C. chairman John C. Doerfer, "I believe . . . an American citizen has a right to know that he is being

sold. I strongly believe that subliminal advertising is distinctly un-American, that its perpetrator belongs in the same class as the Russian brainwasher and the Japanese thought police or the office snoop."

Mr. Ewing called his letter "just one man's opinion," but the outspoken industry publication *Advertising Age* editorialized: ". . . he is wrong; the opinion expressed about advertising which is not identified as advertising is one generally held in the advertising business . . . and which most admen, like Frank Ewing, believe is immoral if not worse."

FROM THE BEGINNING, subliminal advertising's promoters frankly expected antipathy in some quarters. Mr. Vicary declared that he always knew the intellectuals would "land hard on the idea." Advertisers, Congressmen and the F.C.C., though, are quite another matter, and here both Subliminal Projection and Precon have made efforts to allay fears.

Mr. Vicary told F.C.C. that subliminal advertising was a "very weak" stimulus, most useful as a form of "reminder" advertising for products the public already knows, and he strongly urged some sort of official regulation. Precon stressed that since the preconscious mind rejects unwanted subliminal material as readily as the conscious does visible messages, there is no danger involved in using the technique. Both companies are pressing forward, seemingly untroubled by the doubts their efforts raise in the minds of other citizens.

Based on subliminal advertising's unsteady progress in the past six months, what conclusion may one reach? Most important, no convincing evidence exists that subliminal advertising is commercially workable, and a substantial body of opinion holds that it is not. Its promoters insist that in any event viewers have adequate psychological defenses against it. Seen in this light, pictures of brainwashed consumers, buying against their will, are exaggerated. Nevertheless, the public recoil at the first mention of subliminal advertising was sound. The notion of such advertising is unquestionably repellent.

Subliminal advertising would deny the consumer even the possibility of exercising a conscious rational choice. Whether or not it works, its intention is that of a psychological sneak attack and an outrageous invasion of privacy. Yet the persistence and industry of the promoters of subliminal advertising, abetted by various interested parties, forces a distasteful final conclusion: If the technique should prove successful in selling goods, pressure to use it would sweep aside pious expressions of distaste. In that event, only an aroused public opinion—expressed through representatives, through direct approach to advertisers and through acceptance or rejection of the entertainment vehicles that employ subliminal advertising—will determine how far its advocates will be allowed to go.

THOSE OTHER AMERICANS

THE POSSIBILITY that Senator Kennedy may be in the running has revived the old question about whether a Catholic can ever reach the White House. I find it hard to take some of the talk about this very seriously, not because I believe Senator Kennedy has no chance but because what is a matter of prejudice is so often put forth as a grave intellectual quandry.

I do not believe that those who profess to be tortured by the question are insincere; I do believe, though, they are working out a personal problem and have reached the stage where they feel the need to rationalize a position that is anything but rational. Anyone who has ever had to overcome a prejudice of his own, as most of us have, knows what they are going through. I sympathize with them but do not feel any particular desire to play the can-a-Catholic-be-a-democrat game that diverts them from their real problem.

If a Catholic cannot be trusted with the Presidential office because of his religious commitments, it is often asked, quite properly I think, why should he be any more trustworthy as a Senator or as a Supreme Court justice? In the one case he makes law and in the other he interprets the Constitution. Still, we hear very little about the grave intellectual problem that a Jack Kennedy presents as a member of the Senate and practically nothing about the threat to religious liberty the decisions of Frank Murphy constituted when he sat on the Court. Why does the Presidency make all the difference?

I suspect the real reason is that the President occupies an office which is at least partly symbolic; in his person he represents the American people before the world. This means for many that he should belong to the dominant ethnic and religious group.

But we cherish another symbol connected with the Presidency; we cherish the myth that America's highest office is a possibility open to every boy in the land. Poverty is no handicap, humble origin is no handicap. Any schoolboy in America can aspire to be President, according to the theory. In fact, of course, kids who have dark skins, those who celebrate Passover, those who go to Mass, and a few other sons of Cain would be well advised to settle for something less.

Can we continue to have it both ways like this? Can we insist that our Presidents all be WASP's (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants) and at the same time proclaim piously that the door is wide open? Apparently we can if we can find enough rationalizations. And rationalizations are not hard to find. We are in for a rash of them if the Kennedy boom keeps booming. We are going to be told how much anguish was entailed in

reaching the conclusion that thirty-five million Americans are not quite American enough. We will hear pleas for personal understanding: "I would be the last man in the world, as you all know, to attach a religious test to the qualifications for public office. I beg of you then not to misunderstand me when I ask whether a Roman Catholic should hold the highest office in the land . . ." Etc., etc.

For the old-fashioned WASP, there was no anguish; no rationalization was necessary. In his world the minorities were everywhere, pushing, pushing, but the White House was one place where the line could be drawn. There would be no fish on Friday or Kosher kitchens in the White House as long as he had a vote. You did not hear him giving philosophical arguments about why no Catholic need apply; he did not believe it was necessary to defend a position so obvious.

The modern liberal syndrome is something else again. Here, prejudice has to be disguised as an intellectual problem. Challenge the old-fashioned bigot and he told you what he thought of you and your kind. His grandson wants to do the same thing and be your best friend all the while. When he puts you in your place he does so by thesis, with footnotes. But it all adds up to the same thing.

I can understand this, as I say. But I do not know why anyone should be expected to take seriously the intellectual arguments that support it. The purpose of the inquiry is not to find out whether a Catholic President would be trustworthy; it is to get some conscience-saving assurance that he would not be.

There are two live questions: how many people will vote against a candidate just because he is a Catholic? how many people will vote for him for the same reason? Will they cancel each other out, so the election can be determined by more rational factors?

There are probably too many of both types still around, but, let us pray, not as many as there used to be, nor as many as certain propagandists count on. I know I do not want to vote for anyone just because he is a Catholic, and I hope to heaven that the P.O.A.U. crowd does not create a situation where I will react emotionally and do so, despite my better judgment.

The 1960 election may be the first big test for Will Herberg's thesis that America is no longer simply a "Protestant" but a "Catholic-Protestant-Jewish" country. It is going to be interesting to see how the thesis stands up. In the meantime Senator Kennedy has no reason for overconfidence; neither Senator Javits nor Senator Neuberger should get his Presidential hopes up too high.

JOHN COGLEY.

*In Yugoslavia, university students
are once again battling the government*

Tito's Great Failure

by MATTHEW M. MESTROVIC

A YUGOSLAV official close to the Marshal expressed it this way: "Foreign policy, industrialization—yes, Tito is well pleased with our successes in these fields. What worries Tito most of all is the hostility of the young people to Communism. For if the youth is against us who will inherit the revolution?"

My stay in Yugoslavia convinced me that this was a candid and, on the whole, accurate appraisal of the successes and failures of the Communist regime. Tito, the shrewd dictator of a small, backward country, has managed to assume a world role as a leader of a "neutralist third force." And he is gradually transforming Yugoslavia from an undeveloped agrarian country into a modern industrialized nation. There is no denying the fact that, despite enormous waste in human energy, ill-conceived plans and badly executed projects, industrial production there, although still low, has increased greatly over pre-World War II levels.

Yugoslavia's great social revolution is "solving" the peasant problem by gradually uprooting the farmers from the land and turning them into a city proletariat. This, however, is not diminishing opposition to Communism as Tito had hoped it would. Rather it is changing the character of the opposition from the passive, essentially negative peasant resistance into an urban opposition, potentially more deadly because it is better organized and more revolutionary. Most great revolutions, including the 1956 Hungarian revolt, did not, after all, germinate on farms but in the cities among intellectuals and workers.

The Communists have despaired of winning over the "backward peasants" and the "remnants of the old bourgeoisie." These are for the Communists a lost generation, to be eliminated in time by death. In private conversations Communist leaders have frankly admitted that the masses of the people were against them. "We know that only five per cent of the people in Yugoslavia are Communists," Milovan Djilas told Professor Ivan Mestrovic a few years ago, "and in [Catholic] Croatia the figure may drop as low as three per cent." But this did not, at the time, unduly worry

Djilas, then one of Yugoslavia's top leaders. For, he went on to say, all great revolutions in history were sparked by a small élite. "Christianity, too, in the beginning had the support of only a small segment of the people," Djilas said. But now, as Tito himself seems to have realized, even the new "élite," raised on the Marxist dialectic, is opposed to Communism.

THIS REJECTION of Communism by young intellectuals and professional people is all the more ironic since many present-day Communist leaders joined the Party while students at Belgrade University in World War II years. Their zeal for Communism was to a large extent the result of the traditional Serbian affinity for Russia and a strong feeling that intellectuals should serve the downtrodden masses. Curious as it may seem, many young "Communists" in those days were children of "capitalists" and "reactionary politicians." Koca Popovic, for instance, Tito's foreign minister, came from a wealthy Serbian family, and Lola Ribar, one of Croatia's top Communists when killed in 1944, was the son of Dr. Ivan Ribar, who presided over Yugoslavia's parliament in 1921, when the Communist Party was outlawed.

Today, more than twelve years after the Communists swept into power, university students are again battling the government—now run by Marshal Tito. Zagreb University, as well as other universities in Yugoslavia, is a center of militant anti-Communism. Last summer over three hundred students were expelled from Zagreb University for allegedly being "Croat chauvinists." The police rounded up scores of such students, who were tried in secret and given stiff jail sentences. Tito's government likes to boast that it has resolved the national rivalries that led to brutal Serb-Croat massacres in World War II, but the Communist slogan—"brotherhood and union"—rings hollow in view of the hundreds of Croat students and farmers who were jailed in 1957, and some even condemned to death, as alleged "national chauvinists."

Disillusioned by "socialist reality," the Yugoslav youth of today want, above all, more personal and political freedom. They speak most ardently of protection against arbitrary arrest, the right to worship freely,

Mr. Mestrovic, who teaches at Fairleigh Dickinson University, recently visited Yugoslavia after an absence of fifteen years.

assemble freely, organize freely. They are opposed to a Leviathan government that tries to mold their lives and, what is worse, their thoughts. They believe with Djilas, in *The New Class*, that "it is tyranny at its worst to compel men to express thoughts that are not their own."

An old priest who had spent much of his life as a teacher told me dejectedly that "the vast majority of Yugoslav youth is not Communist. But many young people who have passed through Communist schools have become cynics, skeptics, and even materialists." For many of these disillusioned and disgusted youths, life's chief aim has become ownership of an automobile, or barring this, at least a motor scooter. "What else is there?" a Moslem university student asked me in Sarajevo.

But the average Yugoslav worker earns about 15,000 dinars a month. At this rate it would take him 260 months to earn 4,000,000 dinars—the price of a new car in Yugoslavia. Compared to Yugoslav workers and farmers, the average American lives like a millionaire. "Even if I work twenty hours a day for twenty years, I will not earn enough money to buy a car," a young worker told me. "Yet a friend of mine," the worker continued, "escaped to the U.S. two years ago, is now a worker in Detroit and already has a car of his own."

The United States, the land where every man owns a car, a T.V. set, a refrigerator, seems to the Yugoslav a terrestrial paradise, a utopia of milk and honey. And Uncle Sam seems a year-round Santa Claus, who since 1951 has poured over two billion dollars' worth of aid into Titoland. Except for this large and generous assistance, thousands of Yugoslavs might have starved to death.

But Yugoslavs don't admire the U.S. solely for its wealth and generosity in material things. For them America is the historic champion of freedom for all nations. President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points brought freedom to millions of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes who were unwilling subjects of Austria-Hungary. And except for Wilson's firm stand, parts of Dalmatia and other Croat and Slovene lands would

have been annexed by Italy at the end of World War I. In those days not a single village in Dalmatia lacked a Wilson Street or a Wilson Square.

The young people admire America, but they believe that a welfare state of the British or Swedish type is more suited to Yugoslav realities than U.S. capitalism. For decades, "capitalism" was synonymous with foreign exploitation of both Yugoslavia's resources and people. No government in Yugoslavia could or would return the mines, for example, to their former foreign owners. And most of Yugoslavia's old factories (there weren't many) were smashed during the war. New factories built by the Communist government have never had private owners who could rightly claim them.

THE YEARS following the Tito-Stalin break were years of high hope and optimism in Yugoslavia. Young intellectuals believed in those days that the Communist regime, after shattering the old society into a thousand bits, would then remold it closer to the people's desires. But Djilas' expulsion from the Yugoslav Central Committee in 1954 showed that the limit of "liberalization" had been reached, and any further concessions by the Communists would necessitate their abandonment of political power. And this the Communists would never agree to. For, as Djilas put it, "power is Communism's very essence, without which it cannot exist." The backtracking of the regime towards a harsher dictatorship, plus the renewal of cordial relations with the Soviet Union, persuaded about twenty-five thousand Yugoslavs—mostly Croats under twenty-five—to escape to the West in 1957.

Obviously, in a free election the Communists would be buried under an avalanche of hostile votes. But whom would the people support? Djilas? "Djilas is a poet and a dreamer," several young people in Yugoslavia told me. "He is not a practical politician, the organizer of a political movement." Djilas' lonely isolation in 1954 shows his failure to master the art of Balkan intrigue and power politics.

How many young people in Yugoslavia—particularly in Serbia—would like to see King Peter II return? The answer is not many. "The past cannot be resurrected," a young Serb told me in Belgrade, "and besides, the corrupt and weak royal regime was largely responsible for the rise of Communism." While in Yugoslavia, I spoke to scores of people—young and old—and for most of them the prewar political parties and leaders are just ancient history. Anyway, the Communists have completely wiped out all the prewar political parties. They control all labor unions, the press, the radio, and dominate the Orthodox and Moslem Churches. In fact, the Roman Catholic Church is the only organization of any kind that has kept free of Communist control.

In the political vacuum that would follow the downfall of Communism, the Church in Roman Catholic



Croatia and Slovenia would certainly be called upon to assume an important role of leadership. In Slovenia—even in pre-World War I days—the Catholic clergy was influential in the nationalist movement. Between the two World Wars the Slovene People's Party, led by Monsignor Anton Korosec, was the dominant political movement in Slovenia. In Croatia, however, the dominant Croat Peasant Party had anti-clerical overtones. But the years of martyrdom have greatly increased the Church's prestige and popularity among the people. In a free election a Christian Democratic movement would probably emerge as the most powerful grouping in the Roman Catholic areas of Yugoslavia. But to retain leadership such a movement would have to be both Christian and social in scope.

Yet the problem of non-Communist leadership in Yugoslavia may be more apparent than real. A dictatorship does not permit the emergence of opposition leaders, but this does not mean they do not exist. At a moment of crisis leaders spring up from among the people. How many Yugoslavs heard of "Comrade Walter" (as Tito was once called) prior to 1942? How many Frenchmen suspected in 1784 that a wiry little cadet at Brienne named Napoleon Bonaparte would in a few years control their destinies? So too, in Yugoslavia today, there must be clever and resourceful young people who will be the leaders of tomorrow.

One of the best hopes that freedom will in the end prevail over tyranny lies precisely in the fact that the children of the Communist revolution have rejected their inheritance.

SINGING

Each gift has its particular pain,
As people define themselves in love
Or angels act each in a form above:
Light, strict, clear, telling and warm,
In it our bodies are consumed;
Air, vague, moving, fertile and strong,
It in us is borne, consumed and gone;
Earth, dark, thick, translated sun,
It feeds, is fed by our flesh and bone;
Water, deep, wide, mark of time
It is the oil of God to form our limbs—
These elements are the angels' shades,
Are materials to suffer the mind.
As angels announce us thoughts of God,
So our matter tells that each act of love—
For our fingers, for our breasts and thighs,
With each individual pain—is singing
The glory of our lives, as we cry to be consumed
As light, air, earth and water are,
Yet blessing the gift of life that makes us sing.

SALLY APPLETON.

THE STAGE

THE PROVINCE AND THE POETRY

IN HIS new and handsome *Guide to Contemporary French Literature* (Meridian), Mr. Wallace Fowlie, writing of François Mauriac, has found an admirable phrase to suggest the echoing harmony of M. Mauriac's landscapes of the soul with that other first world, fierce in its wild solitude, of the sandy forests about Bordeaux, of *les Landes*: "the province," Mr. Fowlie observes, "is part of the poetry." One knows this acrid, piney scent from the novels, the incendiary heat and resin smoking the air: afternoons without end, terrible in their connivance—that chance encounter by the path—and terrible too in their self-knowing. When he turned to "Asmodée," his most famous play now having its American premiere, M. Mauriac ventilated that pungent scene, dilated it with remembrance and with love. He sought to evoke, with some of Chekhov's taut languor—that dramatic form, he has confessed, to which he most aspires—the spacious days of the heart's rise and fall, evenings heavy with moonlight and the drone of cicadas. Nothing is gentler here than the recurrent image of the broken little mill, at which these lovers—the tormented as well as the voluntary—make their trysts: it is the place of nostalgia, of sweetness and of loveliest communion.

Within the great house, muffled, all is as one had known: draperies drawn against the heat and, by symbolic inference, against the invading clamor of passion. The "Asmodée" of the title is a legendary demon who lifted the roofs of houses to glimpse the roiling life within; it is one of M. Mauriac's ironies that he should take the form here of an English student, trembling on the threshold of manhood, and full of the large, free English innocence and grace. His presence is like one of the winds which stir the pine trees, or like the sudden fires which devastate the Landes: to the women of the house, both of whom vie subtly for his attention, he brings an irrevocable release from illusion and stasis. The daughter comes out of her exquisite piety of devotion into a headiness of love, yet strangely shadowed; the mother—one of those rustling, unquiet queens in the kingdom of middle-age, petulant yet grand, full of vanity and terror, a figure in the Racinian line drawn here with that infallible French austerity which runs so passionately cross-grained to a rich sensuous solicitation—this mother sees in the boy a last ardor and grace, and renounces finally the possibility he suggests with that conscious splendor of the heart at its deepest pitch of grieving knowledge.

One member only of the household resists the young man's appeal, wars actively, indeed, against it: that is the tutor Blaise Couture, the quintessential Mauriac

"problem," and an obsessive moral "type" Molière would dimly have recognized. In a provincial society, Couture exercises the magnetism of the pure conscience: the world is but a field for his sowing of guilt. He must panic at the entrance of its impulses and distractions, because they challenge his power; he must seek to close the house against time and change, because within its heavy stillness, he is desperately counterfeiting an identity. M. Mauriac sees Couture as a more significant figure than Tartuffe because he is not a conscious hypocrite, because he acts always, and destructively, in good faith. Quite so. He is also, ironically, of less human and imaginative richness, because his obsession detaches him from a society which can be rationally ordered and judged; he would have true autonomy and power only in a world heightened beyond this bourgeois implacability. M. Mauriac's preoccupation with his malignant phosphorescence, so persuasive, so discreet, so wise in the gentilities of personal domination, would yet be called indulgence in a lesser writer; it suggests commitments of some deeper insistence and is, indeed, most telling as a study in Christian pathology.

It is instructive, since M. Mauriac has invoked Tartuffe, to consider how Molière might have regarded Blaise Couture, whose relation is less to that swilling, pawing hypocrite than it is to Alceste in *Le Misanthrope*, another impure critic of an impure society, and a more ambitious figure, devious and blighted—an instance of *waste*—yet one whom all the will and energy in the world cannot provoke into tragic consequence. M. Mauriac has himself a passage elsewhere on Alceste which is to the point: "The whole misfortune of Alceste, of that Alceste who is in all of us, lies in a psychological need of the absolute that we bring to love which is the most relative of human feelings." He could not have underlined more suggestively the character of Blaise Couture, yet the irony of Alceste as well as Couture is that both are involved not in love, but in an intimidating enterprise of vanity; to it they bring every rhetoric, force, cruel indifference and stratagem of those trapped by their own nothingness. And what indeed can be one more miscalculation of reality—even religious—amid such swamps of self-delusion as these two personages inhabit? The peculiar sting, wry twist and greatness of *Le Misanthrope* lies in its closing mark of interrogation, that poised, sad suspension of a final grace; it allows nothing, as Mr. Martin Turnell so eminently observes, but the clarification of our feelings, and "the perception that social adjustment is a personal matter where in the last resort no facile slogan or philosophical system can help us." Molière's method, if one may be so impertinent, is to shed the equable radiance of *le juste nature* over a world in which, monsters withal, there are ~~beings~~ in whom reason and instinct are harmonious; ~~the~~ beauty of his art lies in

the distribution and proportion of tone, the expression of a theme through order.

Mauriac's audacity, in "Asmodée," has been to introduce a figure—monster, moral type, humor, what you will—drawn from the Molière daylight world of solidity and generous reason, into the passionate upheaval and chiaroscuro, the terrible reason, of the Racinian abyss. It is the supreme enterprise of the French literary mind to record the colloquy of this lucidity which is Molière's heritage, with the secret knowledge which is Racine's torment. M. Mauriac's translation of that dialogue to the sphere of sanctity and grace and evil deepens and enriches, yet obliquely confines it; a *disastrous* world has been gained and affirmed, but at some loss of an old and loving human wisdom. Which is to say: this "Asmodée" convinces powerfully on every level but the absolute one of impersonality. As a work for the theater, it suffers from the presence of "problems," and from the explicit articulation of what is, in M. Mauriac's novels, a pervasive sensibility and tone; one might charge the same insistence against Mr. Graham Greene's dramas. Still, this subdued rendering of states of innocence and illusion shows a great Christian imagination at the tide of fullest passionate encounter and recognition; in language luminous yet exact, M. Mauriac does grave justice at once to the world and to the absolute demands of that spirit which, knowing, must suffer and transcend the world.

The producers of "Asmodée" have sought, within their modest resources, to give the work every distinction, including a fluent new translation by Mr. Beverly Thurman. They are limited, to be sure, by an open setting which, despite its excellent Motley design, denies M. Mauriac the claustral somberness his imagination always seeks to impose. And Mr. John O'Shaughnessy, the director, unfortunately has not found a mode of austerity in which the diverse styles of his players might coalesce. Miss Elizabeth Farrar's bourgeois Phèdre, as an instance, is intelligently marked and understood, psychologically discerning. It wants, however, not only racial flavor and pride, but a certain large tumult—indeed, passionate *self-consciousness*. It seems a performance designed for another, slighter theater. Mr. Louis Edmonds, so well remembered from the romantic authority of his Mirabell, has imagined for Blaise Couture a persuasive pattern of movement, and images, almost clerical, of taut asceticism. Yet his pious malignity lacks resonance, and one is rarely conscious of the desperate investment Blaise has made in this provincial family. The disturbing effect is often to reduce M. Mauriac's spiritual simplicity of absolutes to something like simple-mindedness. It may be, however, that American actors, rawly ignorant of this ancient vein of Christian usage and habit of life, could never render its unique sensibility, so vigilant, tender

and solitary; so curiously abstract yet fraught with peril, as of one traveling a road lit only by the indistinguishable torches of grace and damnation. (*At Theatre 74, 334 East 74th Street*).

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

THE FACE OF WAR

THE MOVIE version of "The Young Lions" presents reviewers with that old problem: how much should they bicker over the changes made from the original novel? The novelist has a right to see his work respected; but at the same time the movie makers, concerned about their investment, have a right to make a film to which they hope people will go. Changes are often necessary—and are often able to improve the movie without losing the spirit of the original. Such was the case recently with the films made from *Peyton Place* and *The Quiet American*. And such is the case with "The Young Lions." Scriptwriters experimented with Irwin Shaw's novel for years, but not until Edward Anhalt wrote his good screenplay was a movie made. And a very good movie it is. Although the characters differ considerably from Shaw's, the themes are similar. Let's say "The Young Lions" is a fine movie, vaguely suggested by the Shaw novel.

The film, like the novel, tells the story of three young men, the young lions who are thrown into World War II and who are changed by it. Dean Martin, in a manner reminiscent of his casual singing style, plays an actor who is thoroughly cynical about the war, would just as soon let someone else do his fighting for him ("I know in ten years we'll be friends with the Germans and the Japs") and accepts being drafted as an unpleasant complication that must somehow be got through. Montgomery Clift gives one of his best film performances as a sensitive and likable Jewish chap who has to fight not only the nation's enemy but also a national enemy: the anti-Semitism that his fellow soldiers display towards him at camp. Clift's efforts to preserve his integrity and self-respect have a good effect on Martin. These two Americans don't meet up with the third leading character until the end of the film, but from the very beginning we get bits of the story of the German soldier, expertly played by Marlon Brando, who now has a Teutonic accent and blond hair. This is the role that was changed most of all for the movie; Shaw's German grew more tough, more Nazi, more bestial, more bitter as the story progressed; the movie's German grows less military as he sees the horrors of war, and he becomes softer, more disillusioned with the Nazi regime, more hateful of its cause and methods.

Edward Dmytryk has directed these people well and the many others in the large cast, too. Although the women's roles are small, they are effective, especially May Britt as the decadent wife of Brando's captain (Maximilian Schell); Hope Lange as Clift's wife, a New England girl; Liliane Montevecchi as a Paris girl reluctant to consort with the German conquerors (she spurns Brando as a young, golden god of war, but she promises to see him after a little of the gold has worn off); Barbara Rush as Martin's sometimes fiancée who deplores his selfishness. Considering its complicated story and extreme length, "The Young Lions" is particularly successful in keeping its three simultaneous plots running smoothly and clearly. It seems perfectly logical that the action should jump from Germany to France to Africa to America; and at all times the interest is upheld. Without preaching, or perhaps using the most effective kind of visual preaching, the film makes clear its stand against war, prejudice, hate and other evils.

Special tribute should be given to the late Al Lichtman for his first-rate production of "The Young Lions," with its fine cast and handsome black-and-white Cinema-Scope photography. He would have been pleased at the praise the film is winning.

THE PREVALENCE of war pictures continues, and for audiences who can't seem to get their fill of that sort of thing there is "Run Silent, Run Deep," another submarine movie. Submarine films, like airplane films, run to a sameness. Even this one, with its good script based on the exciting novel by Captain Edward L. Beach, rings a familiar note. Besides, the usual complications of men living in cramped quarters while on a dangerous mission, the plot gets involved in tensions between a commander (Clark Gable) and his lieutenant (Burt Lancaster), who thinks the boss is making too much like Ahab or Queeg in insisting that their sub go beyond duty in tracking down the Japanese destroyer that has been sinking so many American submarines. Harold Hecht has given this story, most of which is confined to a submarine, a good production and Robert Wise has directed his largely-male cast well. If you're ready for more heroics above and below the water line, you might try running silent and deep.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"THE G.O.P. IN THE MIDWEST"

Green Bay, Wisconsin

TO THE EDITORS: Mr. Victor C. Ferkiss, in his interesting essay "The G.O.P. in the Midwest" [Jan. 24], is mistaken in stating that "In Wisconsin,

in 1946 . . . Joseph R. McCarthy . . . received support from Wisconsin Communists." Desperate political opponents invented this gossip, and it should receive no credence from serious students of political history.

This alleged support is referred to in the obituary of the Senator, printed in the *New York Times* of May 3: "It was in that primary fight that Communists were rumored to have thrown their support to Judge McCarthy . . . The Madison (Wis.) *Capitol Times*, while not stating flatly that Judge McCarthy had Communist support, published second-hand quotations allegedly from Communist members then in the State Congress of Industrial Organizations to the effect that the C.I.O. would beat Senator LaFollette by supporting Judge McCarthy. Actually, the bulk of C.I.O. support then seemed to go to the Democratic party."

Senator LaFollette's defeat was attributed by most observers, not to any "sinister dynamism" on the part of the victor, nor to his "isolationist and anti-Communist stands," but rather to his complacency in

campaigning and to his dissolution of the party his father had founded.

GERARD L. NOLAN.

REPLY

Berkeley, Calif.

TO THE EDITORS: Contrary to the impression given by Mr. Nolan's letter, I did not attempt in my article to assay the *causes* of McCarthy's victory over LaFollette in the 1946 Republican primary.

I did state that McCarthy received Communist support in that primary. It is a documented fact that the Communist-edited *Wisconsin C.I.O. News*, organ of the then Communist-dominated state C.I.O., carried on a bitter attack against LaFollette throughout the period preceding the election (and, although LaFollette had always received strong support from the labor areas of Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha, he lost all three to McCarthy in '46).

Various non-Communist C.I.O. officials have since even gone so far as to attribute McCarthy's victory to his Communist support; for example, in an interview with the Madison *Capitol Times* in 1952, Wisconsin C.I.O. President Herman Steffes insisted that "the Communists were definitely responsible for the election of McCarthy." (Quoted page 65, *The Progressive* [April 1954]).

Split the difference between Mr. Steffes' conjecture and Mr. Nolan's flat denial of the mere existence of Communist support and you have my original statement that McCarthy "received support from Wisconsin Communists, who resented LaFollette's isolationist and anti-Communist stands."

VICTOR C. FERKISS.

AMERICAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGIANS

Paris

TO THE EDITORS: I find it difficult to find much basis in fact that will justify Mr. Cogley's broad condemnation of American Catholic theological journals and of Catholic theological faculties in general ["Anyone Listening?" Feb. 7].

Specifically with regard to theological journals: To consider *Worship*—whose international reputation as that of its editor has long been assured—as some kind of "house organ" or as concerned with trivial issues seems to me as grave an inaccuracy as to criticize *Theological Studies* on these same grounds, or because it has not devoted its pages to the religious bases of social or political thought. *Theological Studies* has been acknowledged by Dom Trethowan, former editor of the *Downside Review*—in some ways the nearest British counterpart to the Jesuit quarterly—as the outstanding theological journal of the English-speak-

THE SPIRITANS

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by HENRY J. KOREN, C.S.Sp., S.T.D.

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FREDERIC's father wanted him to be a gangster rather than a priest and wept for shame when he first saw his son in a cassock. . . .

JAMES loved flashy uniforms and horseflesh, yet a century later his grave is still venerated as the shrine of a saint by 50,000 people on the anniversary of his death. . . .

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ing world. This is an opinion in which all must concur. That these publications or *Theology Digest* are not preoccupied with social or political issues results simply from the fact that it is the mission of such periodicals as the *Review of Politics* and the *Catholic Sociological Review*, or *The Commonwealth* and the *Catholic World* to translate theological principles—which are readily available to the serious researcher—into terms applicable to the other sciences. That Catholic thinkers may give counsel to the Republican Secretary of State—as Mr. Cogley suggests they should—with as much readiness as they gave it to his Democratic predecessors at the time of Hiroshima or Korea is a desideratum not for theologians but for social scientists.

Moreover, to criticize implicitly the *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, or the *Thomist* for limiting their interests to the fields embraced by their titles seems to me no more valid than it would be to criticize *The Commonwealth* for failing to publish essays on the refinements of scholastic sacramental theology. If Mr. Cogley was not referring to the six theological journals I have mentioned, then I misunderstand completely his article.

Mr. Cogley's general condemnation of the mediocrity of American Catholic theological formation seems to me equally unfounded. Indeed, in the widespread dismay over Catholic higher learning, the quality of seminary instruction seems one of the few areas of relative excellence. For if one compares the typical Catholic seminary with the typical Protestant seminary—including the seminaries of all the various sects save those which ordain on little more ability than literacy—on most levels the training in the Catholic institution would appear probably superior; and if one points to Harvard Divinity School or Union Theological Seminary, one can with equal justification look to Woodstock or Catholic University. Other than the recognized deficiencies in all Catholic higher education, and an occasional subservience to an extreme notion of tradition, the one significant criticism which would seem to bear on our theological schools is that when they exist within the framework of a university, they generally segregate themselves from the broader cultural life of the school.

Mr. Cogley's remarks on Tillich and Niebuhr seem of little relevance not only because this nose-counting of intelligencies entails a type of sociological apparatus which has not yet been perfected, but also because, with regard to Tillich, there is no question of an American theologian, and with regard to Niebuhr, one could, if he were so inclined, name ten or fifteen Catholic or Protestant theologians, perhaps of less fame, but certainly of comparable attainments.

Finally, I would add that if American Catholic theological discussion appears somewhat temperate in contrast to the volatility of European controversies,

this moderation has not been without important benefits. When one considers the frequently divergent viewpoints of the *American Catholic Ecclesiastical Review* and *Theological Studies*, and when one considers that generally these viewpoints have been propounded sincerely and earnestly, but without excessive acerbity, then it is obvious that there is an intellectual climate here—quite unlike that prevailing in Europe a decade ago—in which the gradual assimilation of new insights will take place over a period of years without any of that bitterness and furor which serve only to embarrass the authorities and precipitate decisions on questions that might otherwise remain open.

JUSTUS GEORGE LAWLER.

REPLY

New York, N.Y.

TO THE EDITORS: Mr. Lawler suggests that he might have misunderstood my article. I am afraid he has. I said I was bothered by the fact that "Catholic theology lacks the pace in American life it might have." I doubt whether Mr. Lawler, or even the testy diocesan editor who recommended that I would do well to read eleven volumes of proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society, would question that. Even an admirer of the publications Mr. Lawler cites would be hard pressed to show that they or their contributors are having any significant impact on American intellectual or political life. Paul Tillich and Reinhold Niebuhr are. (An exception might be made in the case of *Theological Studies*, but then I specifically exempted the work of Fathers Murray and Weigel.)

The question is not whether theologian X is better than theologian Y or whether Protestant seminaries are generally inferior to Catholic seminaries. The question is: Have Catholic theologians, whatever their merits, met the challenge found in the present general receptivity to theological wisdom? To quote myself: "Where are the Catholic theologians capable of doing for Catholicism what men like Paul Tillich and Niebuhr have done for Protestantism?"

I do not believe the problem is met by suggesting that theologians should theologize and then turn the job over to journalists and political scientists who will "apply" theological truths in some assembly-line manner. I agree, rather, with Dom Aelred Graham's observation: "What seems most to be called for is not that we should hasten to seek concrete applications for the Catholic premises, as that we should submit these premises themselves to contemplative analysis." It could be that the Catholic failure is due to the fact that too much emphasis has been placed on "applying" truth and not enough on learning to love it.

JOHN COGLEY.

Although "H.D." learned from Pound,
her lyric gift soon found its own voice

A Poet's Poet

by HORACE GREGORY

THE FOLLOWING notes on the poems of H.D. are written to pay tribute to an American poet whose writings have yet to receive full measure of critical attention in the United States. Hilda Doolittle, who, in 1911, established her permanent residence in Europe, has been content to allow the poems, written over the initials, "H.D.," to speak for themselves—and the initials which stand for a signature are almost a *nom de plume*, almost a *nom de guerre*.

Today, and in view of her later poems, it seems somewhat strange that most people still associate her writings only with the cause of "free verse" and "imagism," "the School of Images," that Ezra Pound in 1912 so cheerfully announced held the future "in their keeping." In 1956 H.D. remarked, "One writes the kind of poetry one likes. Other people put labels on it. Imagism was something that was important for poets learning their craft early in this century. But after learning his craft, the poet will find his true direction." Although she learned much from Pound, who included her among *Les Imagistes*, H.D.'s lyric gift, even in her early poems, soon found its own voice, its own themes and measures—all of which were clearly unlike those of her contemporaries. This individual voice is evident throughout her recently published *Selected Poems**.

The kind of poetry the early H.D. liked and wrote was of a classic purity of diction and imagery. No poet since Walter Savage Landor in his "Ianthé" and "Rose Aylmer" moved more surely in the direction of classic lyricism than did H.D. This is not to say that H.D. emulated or imitated Landor, but her economies of statement, her precise choice of rhythms and colors, her sense of the dramatic incident revealed in lyric forms brought her closer to the best of Landor than any American poet of her times.

H.D.'s choice of Greek themes and incidents had been inspired by epigrams from the Greek Anthology,

*SELECTED POEMS. By H. D. Evergreen Books. Grove Press. \$1.45.

Mr. Gregory, a frequent contributor, is co-author of *A History of American Poetry, 1900-1940*, and is co-editor of the recently published *Mentor Book of Religious Verse*.

lines of Meleager on Heliodora, the epigram of Plato which recited a prayer offered up to Aphrodite. Through these inspirations and others of their kind H.D. wrote her own lyrics on Lais, on Heliodora, on Helen of Troy, on Penelope at Ithaca. These were re-creations in modern verse of enduring passions and situations—"the showing-forth" of the timeless moment in situations that are as true today as they were three thousand years ago.

The first stanza of H.D.'s poem on Helen shows how far removed its music is from generally accepted definitions of "free-verse" and mere projections of an image. One must not only see the poem but hear it clearly:

All Greece hates
the still eyes in the white face,
the lustre as of olives
where she stands,
and the white hands.

There is scarcely need for me to quote the entire poem; the poem is among the best known of H.D.'s early lyrics; it is one of the familiar examples of her highly individual style that could neither be imitated nor endowed with greater musical variety—except by the poet herself. Another early poem has the same magic. If we listen to rather than glance at the poem we can hear the unaccustomed accents of pure melody in modern verse:

Where is the nightingale,
in what myrrh-wood and dim?
Oh, let the night come black
for we could conjure back
all that enchanted him,
all that enchanted him.

I believe that these two early lyrics are the touchstones of H.D.'s style. No one has ever disputed their excellence. They have been quoted and requoted many times, yet the greater majority of H.D.'s critics have been so preoccupied by the presence of her imagery that several of her better known poems seem to have

been unheard. The way toward a renewed understanding of her poems is not to strain the eyes, but to hear the poems clearly.

SO MUCH then for the early sources of H.D.'s inspiration and her particular revival of pure melody in English verse. What of the content of her poems? In a letter written to Norman H. Pearson for inclusion in his *Oxford Anthology of American Literature*, she wrote of her "desire to create (music), intellectual curiosity, a wish to make real to myself what is most real." That desire led to the writing of a new version of Euripides' *Ion*, published in the same year, 1937. The play, written in celebration of Pallas Athena, is a play of "showing-forth," of spiritual and intellectual revelation. It is a seeking for and finding of the "light." That which is "most real" is faith, and I quote from the closing lines of H.D.'s version:

if you love the gods,
you too,
shall be loved of fate.

During the years of World War II which H.D. spent in London, she wrote a trilogy of poems, *The Walls Do Not Fall*, *Tribute to the Angels*, *The Flowering of the Rod*, all in celebration of the spirit in time of war, and within these one may find the following passages:

it was *the Angel which redeemed me*,
it was the Holy Ghost—

a half-burnt-out apple-tree
blossoming;

this is the flowering of the rood,
this is the flowering of the wood,

where, Annael, we pause to give
thanks that we rise again from death and live.

These lines move in the direction of lines to Our Lady:

We have seen her
the world over,

Our Lady of the Goldfinch,
Our Lady of the Candelabra,

Our Lady of the Pomegranate,
Our Lady of the Chair;

we have seen her, an empress,
magnificent in pomp and grace,

and we have seen her
with a single flower

or a cluster of garden-pinks
in a glass beside her;

we have seen her snood
drawn over her hair,

or her face set in profile
with the blue hood and stars;

we have seen her head bowed down
with the weight of a domed crown,

or we have seen her, a wisp of a girl
trapped in a golden halo;

we have seen her with arrow, with doves
and a heart like a valentine;

we have seen her in fine silks imported
from all over the Levant,

and hung with pearls brought
from the city of Constantine;

we have seen her sleeve
of every imaginable shade

of damask and figured brocade;
it is true,

the painters did very well by her;
it is true, they missed never a line

of the suave turn of the head
or subtle shade of lowered eye-lid

or eye-lids half-raised; you find
her everywhere (or did find),

in cathedral, museum, cloister,
at the turn of the palace stair.

I submit this poem to Our Lady as one of the best of devotional lyrics written in the twentieth century. It belongs in the company of rarely achieved poems that express the essentials of one kind of religious faith. It is characteristic of H.D. to create a fusion of religious feeling with visions of timelessness, and this in the gathering of many glimpses into the ikon of Our Lady. The poem is an ikon—not an effort to persuade or to force conversions.

It should be remembered that the trilogy of H.D.'s devotional poems had been written at least ten years before the present decade of poets has turned to a revaluation of religious verse. H.D. in her perceptions of timelessness, and in her search for the "real," has always seemed to be writing in advance of her times. In that respect the present generation might well regard her as "a poets' poet."

To be a "a poets' poet" has few tangible rewards, for this means that the poet who holds that title must often wait upon the future for true recognition. Yet the poems of H.D. have acquired a life, a being of their own; at this date one need not argue that they should be read. Of contemporary poets H.D. is among the few whose writings are likely to endure.

Literature and Criticism: Two Approaches

THE FINE ART OF READING. By Lord David Cecil. Bobbs-Merrill. \$5.
LITERATURE AND THE IMAGE OF MAN. By Leo Lowenthal. Beacon. \$4.95.

By WILLIAM ESTY

WHEN ONE picks up two collections of essays in literary criticism by a pair of university professors, and notes that the author of the first is an English blueblood whose family has been important in British public life from the reign of Henry VIII, while the second book is the fruit of an American sociologist's attempt to seek out "the antecedents of the social dilemmas of the mid-twentieth century individual . . . through the analysis of great works of literature since the Renaissance," one knows what to expect. On the one hand, the free yet disciplined play of a ripe mind, on the other, pompous triviality. Our confident literary expectations could hardly be more ill-founded.

An angry young Englishman, writing recently in *Partisan Review*, quoted some choice bits of flummery from the London *Times* editorial page, then snapped: "That's parchment; we write on paper nowadays." Lord Cecil prefers parchment. Here is the opening sentence of his essay on "Some Women Letter Writers": "I like to fancy myself the owner of a beechen and sequestered [a favorite word of his] park and in the park a charming eighteenth-century house—red-brick Queen Anne or cut-stone Adam, I do not mind which—and in the house a brown and tranquil library where I should sit by the fire in the gathering dusk of an autumn evening relaxing over a volume from the correspondence of one of the great women letter writers." Of course, anyone is entitled to write this way, but why would anyone choose to? It sounds like one of S.J. Perelman's take-offs; even more, like one of Kingsley Amis's. The author of *Lucky Jim* is the perfect reviewer for *The Fine Art of Reading*.

Besides a precious "old-fashionedness," Lord Cecil's prose gifts are for the obvious and the downright wrong—often, in his pages, one and the same. Returning to "The Fine Art of Reading," we make such discoveries as that "the so-called laws of art are only tentative generalizations drawn from the observation of particular works, and cannot completely apply to any original work." Or that "Genius—the distinguishing quality of the individual genius, that is what matters."

The rest of the time, when his lordship is not being simply banal, he is delivering himself of such cliché-nonsense as "Shakespeare's aim (in the early comedies) is to take us out of real life into a more agreeable imaginative region." One thinks at once, of course, of Beatrice's cry, "Kill Claudio!" and of Shylock's "I will have my bond." And then a few pages further on one suddenly finds Lord Cecil, in his curious way, acknowledging just these exceptions—only to cite them as major flaws in *Much Ado About Nothing* and *The Merchant of Venice*. So why does the author make the generalization in the first place? Because he wants to believe that Shakesperean comedy is "A Paradise of Dainty Delights." Shakespeare's world, even his comedy world, is much tougher than Lord Cecil cares to admit; when the toughness obstrudes on his attention, he finds it *simply* an imperfection in the comedy. This is to say that Cecil does not really try to come to terms with Shakespeare's imaginative world.

Nor, in any serious way, with anyone else's. We get the stock high-school view of Dickens, "he vitalized in so far as he caricatures" (in those bloodcurdling mob scenes?) We learn that Henry James could write novels that were "logical wholes," but could not "invest character and event with such vitality that they appear as spontaneous and as uncalculated as if their author was Scott."

It is hard, though, to keep re-

minding oneself that one is mostly reading nonsense, the prose flow is so soft, inviting the reader's mind to Lord Cecil's own amiable somnolence. And then, he is often right—dully, repetitively, safely, harmlessly right. Not for Lord Cecil the controversial positions, the outright mistakes of a T.S. Eliot or an F.R. Leavis. These irritate, these stimulate thought: Lord Cecil's aim is to lull. And he has an unfortunate reversed Midas touch, the ability to turn any author he truly loves into lead.

The University of California sociologist frustrates our expectation of a jargon-haunted slough of bad writing and bad thinking. True, we encounter in *Literature and the Image of Man* most of the pet animals in the sociologist's menagerie, the "atomization," the "upward and downward mobility" twins, the "dynamics of society," a herd of "life situations," a covey of "interpersonal relations." But the man is *thinking*, not just making chitchat.

The aim is deliberately limited: to point up some of the relations between literature—specifically, certain major European dramas and novels of the period 1600-1940—and social change, with its concomitant changes in social ideals. The thesis is that literature and social change illuminate each other. This narrowed focus pays off: in Mr. Lowenthal's hands the sociological approach does cast new light on major literary works. He knows that an author may say several things at once (some of which he did not even want to say), and that there are such things as specifically literary values, the values of an autonomous realm. While "most generalized concepts about human nature found in literature prove on close inspection to be related to social and political change," it is also true that "the works of a Cervantes or Ibsen present problems quite different from those of a hack," because the artist is not "an articulate record-machine" but, rather, a "specialized thinker."

Injustice in the World

Lowenthal sees the Renaissance writers he discusses reacting to a transition period when it is felt that anything can happen: the period of absolute monarchy, emerging individualism and increasing secularization that bridges the feudal world and the world of the triumphant middle class. Writers respond by becoming "poets of the new nationalism" (Lope, Corneille); or by dreamily exalting the vanished feudal order (Calderon); or by placing the individual at the center of the universe, where he, within limits, creates his own world (Cervantes, Shakespeare). Later, writers will come to feel that the individual (especially the writer) is thwarted and oppressed by the new middle-class consolidation, just as he once was by the medieval consolidation. As society comes to the fore, "individuation is experienced as socialization" in literary works. Finally, the bourgeois order will itself be threatened, and writers will be found voicing the new totalitarian mystiques.

The value of Mr. Lowenthal's book does not, however, lie in such textbook generalizations, but in its wealth of specific examples. The book's line is a constant shuttle from quotation to sociological dictum and back, from the plays and novels in the foreground to the social background. Lowenthal discriminates, compares, makes distinctions; this is the unceasing activity of his work. Rarely startling, he consistently stimulates; the style is pedestrian, but the pedestrian has his eye fixed on solid ground.

Mr. Lowenthal's critical approach can never take the place of more specifically literary analysis, but it is, in the right hands, a highly useful supplement, enriching the latter. Literature is an autonomous realm, but also a very impure one, and its best critics will always cheerfully use whatever they can snatch from other disciplines, witness Empson. The function of all criticism is to bring us back to the works in question with our awareness heightened. We want to see *more*. Mr. Lowenthal's work meets this test. Lord Cecil's charming old-fogey patter does not.

THE SLEEP OF THE JUST. By Mouland Mammeri. Beacon. \$3.50.

By MORRIS PHILIPSON

THIS NOVEL, *The Sleep of the Just*, has the distinction of being the first by an Algerian Arab to become available in English. It tells, in a desultory manner, the story of a Berber family in a primitive village in the hills, their family feuds and the attempts of the younger generation to make better lives for themselves—all of which end in failure.

Unfortunately, the fact that this is a novel must outweigh the fact that it was written by an Arab of Algeria. If it is read for anthropological truth, it is by no means very informative; as for esthetic truth, it is not very much of a beauty. The complexity of the plot is not resolved, only concluded, by an arbitrary act of injustice in which the major figure, the "intellectual" son, Arezki, is condemned for a murder he did not commit. Thus in form the novel is more like the works of another Algerian, the Frenchman Albert Camus, than like anything more properly Arabian.

The title of the novel is meant to be ironic: the sleep of the so-called just means the insensitivity in which the French bureaucracy self-righteously maintains itself. Or, again, it refers to the way the poverty-stricken, religiously organized, primitive clan society maintains its traditional ways. But the novel is never focused with sufficient concentration on either of these themes to be a thoroughgoing political or social accusation. At the same time that the author is building up his themes, he tries to write a "novel of education" in which his main character moves from a backyard village, through a classical college training, to illusory hopes in a wonderful future. Strictly speaking, the hopes rest on the humanitarian principles of the Allies in the Second World War. The subsequent and continuing war

between the French and the Algerian rebels only underlines his bitter disappointment in these hopes.

But the novel does not reach any other significance than the bald declaration: "There is injustice in the world!" It is in no important way "Algerian," merely the commonplace story of any boy in conflict between his intellectual ideals and his involvement with an illiterate, tradition-ridden family. And it does not follow that the novel therefore has universality. On the contrary, it is a cliché.

Without a context of understanding, a bald declaration of injustice becomes simply pointless, and *The Sleep of the Just* expresses just such a pointlessness. Worse still, the assumptions which condition the thought of the novel rest on a sad oversimplification.

It is the innocence of imagining that if you know "The Truth" then

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you can make all "Good." The poor and primitive young Arab gets an intellectual training. The big words are all there: justice, nobility, beauty, happiness, bliss! But what is he to do with them?

The intellectual confusion is over what the relations ought to be between abstract theoretical knowledge and concrete practical wisdom. Historical humanistic studies are no substitute for social, economic or political policies. The poor hero of this novel makes the mistake of believing that practical improvements must follow from "truths" somehow, without ever trying to discover how. In his case, it is part of imagining that "a better world" was going to be born out of the war just because a better world was what he told himself he was fighting for.

If the novel had been written to characterize such confusion in a naive mind, it might have engaged our compassion. But here the author evidently condones it, sympathizes with it, in effect does not recognize it. And this cannot move the heart because it is an intellectual error, not a genuine moral or emo-

tional conflict. It is a mistake of intellectual adolescence to assume that a good world should be the necessary consequence of a good idea and a good will. And it is a

literary mistake to imagine that a novel can make us weep when, under those circumstances, a young man discovers that the good world doesn't show up.

Between Terror and Humor

ALFRED AND GUINEVERE. By James Schuyler. Drawings by Paul Sagsoorian. Harcourt. \$3.75.

By EDWIN KENNEBECK

THIS is a delectable little book about two children, a deft and funny creation of a high quality somewhere between the terror-haunted humor of Richard Hughes' *A High Wind in Jamaica* and the placid, presumably unself-conscious amusements of Daisy Ashford's *The Young Visitors*. James Schuyler's story consists entirely of conversations and excerpts from a diary kept by Guinevere, who must be a year or two older than Daisy Ashford was at the time she wrote her saga of London high life. Unlike Daisy, Guinevere spells all her words correctly. She also prefers *Madame Bovary* and Manuel Komroff's *Coronet* (and movie magazines) to Nancy Drew mysteries, and has modern notions of adult charm. "Don't you love tall pale women who walk very fast?" she asks a friend.

Guinevere's brother Alfred is perhaps three or four years younger than she, but the two often manage to bridge the chasm of time between them with a mutual respect as generous as the sympathetic understanding with which they tolerate the adults in their lives. "You have to respect the old no matter how horrible they are to you." These children, quite evidently a cut above the level of their friends, are capable of outlandish fantasies and defiances and hatreds, but they have a clear strain of sense, of charity even, of the ability to respond to sense and charity when, as sometimes happens, these virtues are practiced among grownups. Though scarcely a word is spoken or written to indicate it, the reader can infer

their gratefulness to those who respect children—Miss O'Boyle, for instance, the night nurse at the hospital where Alfred has had his appendix removed. When Alfred says he will save part of his fresh orange juice for later, Miss O'Boyle mildly objects; "The vitamin C in orange juice oxidizes very soon after the oranges are squeezed." Alfred simply replies, "What I like about it is the taste," and we know the quality of their mutual regard. Later, when the children are on shipboard, "That grandmotherly-looking old lady has her eye on us and if you don't watch out she'll try to talk to us," Guinevere warns Alfred. But when the lady does make conversation, with such remarks as "You children seem rather nervous . . .," Guinevere is the very soul of tactful condescension: "We're not nervous. We're excited. I'm excited because I love traveling, and my brother's excited because he gets so bored. What smart shoes."

The story line of *Alfred and Guinevere* is not of great consequence. After Alfred's appendectomy, they make a summer visit to the home of their grandmother and Uncle Saul. Guinevere becomes the close friend of a girl named Betty, and they spend much time discussing fashions and planning the future. "Have you found out your aptitudes though?" Betty says. "They're a good clue. Mine are for dancing and managerial." Alfred takes up with a pre-delinquent type named Stanley, whose idea of fun is to smear Guinevere's bed with flour paste. Their father meanwhile is in Europe, their mother comes to grandmother's house from New York, and finally they all sail to Europe to join Father. On the ship the children get to tell the grandmotherly-looking lady about something horrible that they had just

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seen in a park at the beginning of the book. In the evening, they offer some words of comfort for their seasick mother, grandmother, and uncle; Alfred takes occasion to remark that he doesn't wet the bed any more; and after a little routine name-calling they go to sleep, filled with sweet speculations about the infinite days to come.

Suez Crisis

THE SUEZ WAR. By Paul Johnson. Foreword by Aneurin Bevan. Greenberg. \$2.50.

MIDDLE EAST CRISIS. By Guy Wint and Peter Calvocoressi. Penguin. \$.65.
ONE HUNDRED HOURS TO SUEZ. By Robert Henriques. Viking. \$3.

By M. A. FITZSIMONS

THE SUEZ War as well as its prehistory and immediate aftermath is the subject of these three hastily written books. In this class also fall Merry and Serge Bromberger's, *Les secrets de l'expédition d'Egypte*, the most important source so far for the story of British-French-Israeli cooperation. In England Michael Foot and Mervyn Jones's *Guilty Men* and T. E. Utey's *Not Guilty* almost cancel each other out. More are in prospect, and, doubtless, many more will appear before the tangle and mysteries of this incident—which discredited all parties, including the American Government, but the desperate Israelis least—are cleared up.

Paul Johnson, Assistant Editor of the *New Statesman and Nation*, is a lively and vivid journalist. But his liveliness derives from an assumed omniscience, which lights up his villains with the clarity of partisanship. Dulles, he tells us, provoked the crisis because he was under pressure from the Senate to reduce foreign aid, pressure from the cotton bloc to put down Egyptian competition and because he had already been considering a change in previous Middle Eastern policy, fantastically summarized as "support for Nasser." On the next page, the

second consideration is omitted and the Aswan Dam issue is deftly capsuled: "to Dulles it was a pawn in his battle with the Senate." Moreover, the author's historical material is not only quite inaccurate but it is warped by a tenacious adherence to the Leftist journalist slogans of the past. For him there was no Middle Eastern dilemma for Labor's Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin. The latter was simply an anti-Semite whose vanity led to surrender to the Foreign Office Arabophiles. What a host of villains, past and present, Johnson needs to support his simplist righteousness.

In sharp contrast, Guy Wint and Peter Calvocoressi present not a Bunyanesque melodrama of *Demons Abounding*, but a recital of general muddle and malign interplay among allies, precipitating near-tragedy. Theirs is the journalism of *expertise*, inevitably a quasi-scholarship in which the authors, painfully aware of the limits of their knowledge of the details of the Suez story, emphasize the long-term trends and forces at work. Their judiciousness is admirable on the whole, but it is likely that they underplay the role of individuals. Surely judiciousness should not blur the assessment of responsibility, and moral fervor should not rest on false witness.

Robert Henriques presents principally an account of the Israeli Army's performance in the Suez War. The Israeli authorities allowed Henriques, an English novelist, to interview their exuberant army officers immediately after their victory. The author, a former professional British officer, vividly reveals the Israeli operation as a near-

miracle of improvisation. Israel's impressive force is a reserve army. Its morale is excellent, and there is in the deeps a will trained by memories of persecution and drawing strength from a predicament in which desperation lurks. But even a morale so sustained is not proof against the utter certainty of destruction which will face Israel if some of the Arab states become efficient and transform their armies into modern fighting forces and cooperate.



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REVIEWS

William Esty, a New York critic, is a frequent contributor to *The Commonweal* and other magazines.

Morris Philipson is a member of the Philosophy Department at Hunter College in New York.

Edwin Kennebeck, a regular reviewer, is on the staff of a leading New York publishing house.

M. A. Fitzsimons is the editor of the *Review of Politics*.

The 1920's and 1950's

Politics in Wisconsin has repeatedly deviated from the general American pattern.

Eastern comments on the Wisconsin primary election are somewhat fatuous. Because the La Follette machine suffered a loss, the moral was instantly and happily drawn that the intelligent voters of Wisconsin had at last wearied of bossism, that the untterrified had risen and shaken off the shackles, and all the rest of it. The real moral is that personal popularity cannot be transferred. If the original La Follette were still living, there is no reason to suppose he would not be just as strong as ever in Wisconsin. It is, indeed, a striking proof of his vitality that, so long after his death, he still rules Wisconsin through his son. That rule is being impaired and dented, as was inevitable, but it is not yet badly damaged.

It is quite likely, too, that the Republican "stalwarts" have not gained so much as the returns indicate. If the La Follette vote fell off, that may have been due in part to the fact that for the first time it was not swollen so much by Democrats. The latter have had the habit of voting in the Republican primaries to strengthen La Follette. This year Mr. Smith's candidacy interested them enough to make them vote in their own primaries, and of course they could not vote in both.

—From The Commonweal,
April 25, 1928.

It is true that the Democratic party has never amounted to much in Wisconsin in modern times (though F.D.R. did carry the state three times and Wilson and Truman each carried it once). What is too often overlooked, however, is the fact that Wisconsin's Republicanism, like that of the other Upper Midwestern states, is Republicanism of a very special kind. . . .

The process of the incorporation of Midwest Progressives into Democratic ranks has undoubtedly been speeded up by the fact that Eisenhower's Progressive Republicanism has little in common with traditional Midwestern Progressive Republicanism. Insofar as the Eisenhower Modern Republicanism is anything more than a press agent's gimmick, it is an expression of the urban, internationalist, and civil liberties consciousness of Wall Street and the Ivy League, and in some respects strongly resembles Theodore Roosevelt's "New Nationalism." The Progressive heritage of the Upper Midwest is more a legacy from Robert LaFollette, Sr., than from Theodore Roosevelt and indications are the Progressives are finding the atmosphere more congenial in Democratic than in Republican ranks, modern or otherwise.

—Victor C. Ferkiss in The Commonweal,
January 24, 1958.

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